



WEST BROAD STREET ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

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The West Broad Street Economic Development Strategy was adopted by City Council on July 18, 2005 (Ordinance 1213-2005). Please direct all questions regarding the content of the plan to the City of Columbus, Planning Division, 109 N. Front Street, Columbus, Ohio 43215 614-645-8502 This plan can also be viewed at www.columbusinfobase.org



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Dear Citizen

On July 18, 2005 Columbus City Council adopted the West Broad Street Economic Development Strategy and the official guide for revitalization of West Broad Street from Highland to Terrace avenues in the Hilltop.

The West Broad Street Economic Development Strategy is a result of the hard work and dedication of Hilltop residents and business owners. Community participation was critical to ensure that the plan would reflect the needs and aspirations of the Hilltop community.

On behalf of the Department of Development, I would like to congratulate the Hilltop community for their excellent work and their dedication to their neighborhood. I look forward to continuing our partnership on future initiatives that will implement the recommendations of the plan.



*Mark Barbash, Director
Department of Development*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following people contributed to the *West Broad Street Economic Development Strategy*. Their efforts and dedication are sincerely appreciated.

Waseem and Donna Ahmad, Riggs Corner

Bob Alexander, Glenwood Church

Gary Baker II, Homes On The Hill

Ellen Barney, Columbus Urban Growth

Lori Baudro, Columbus Planning Division

Alina Butler, Greater Hilltop CDC

Teresa Chelikowsky, Greater Hilltop Area Commission

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction 4

The Hilltop Community 6

Planning Process 7

Strategic Plan 8

 Model Project 9

 Marketing 12

 Design 12

 Parking and Circulation 12

 Neighborhood Improvements 23

Conclusion 26

Appendix 27

 Economic Development Resources

 City of Columbus 28

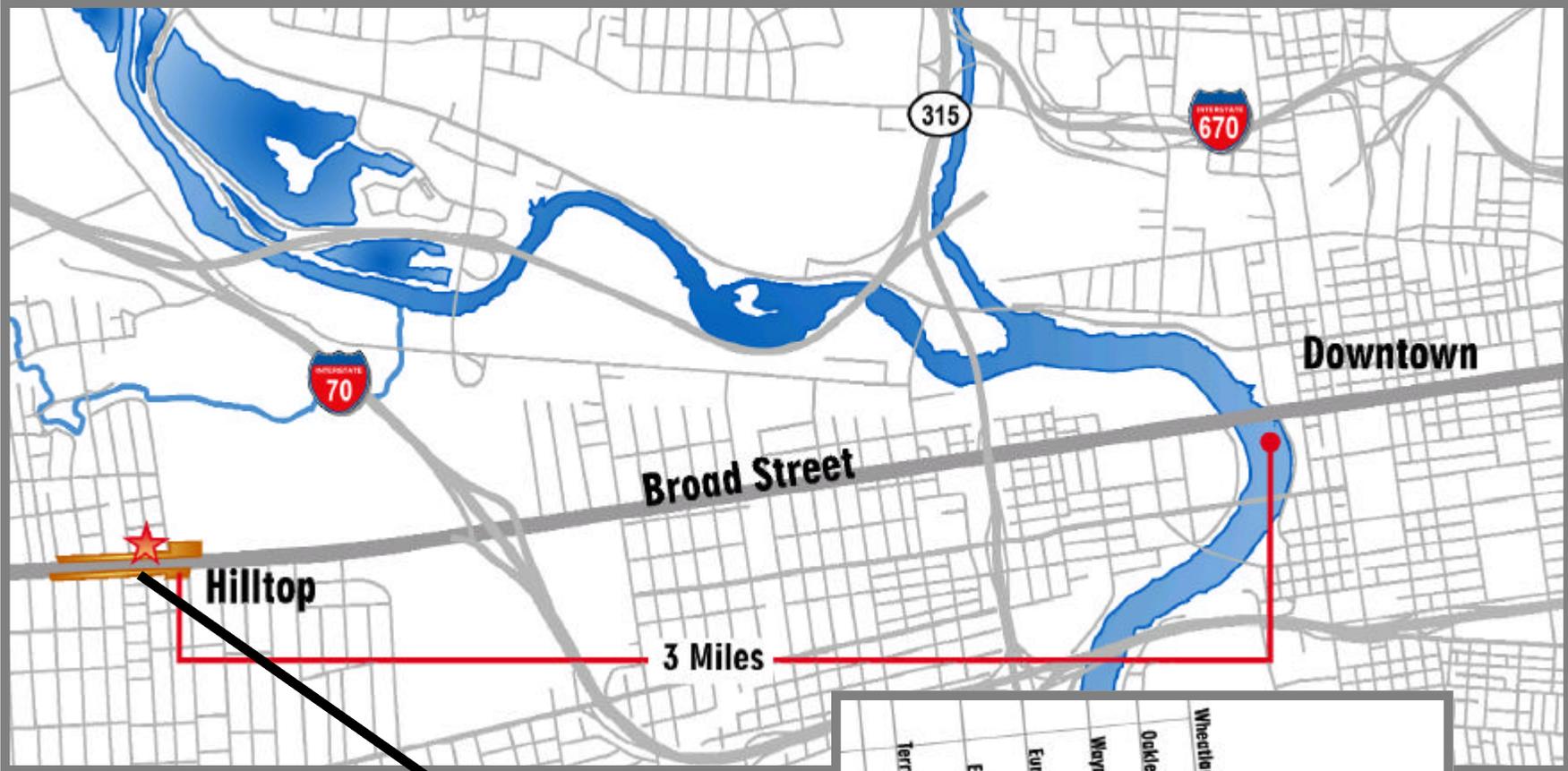
 Greater Columbus Chamber of Commerce 30

 Ohio Department of Development 31

 Housing Assistance Programs 32



LOCATOR AND BOUNDARY MAPS



WEST BROAD STREET EXISTING LAND USE (GROUND FLOOR)



- Office
- Parking
- Public/Institution
- Religious
- Residential
- Retail
- Vacant



The Hilltop is located on the west side of the city of Columbus. The community is bounded on the north by Interstate 70, on the east by the B&O Railroad, and on the south and west by Interstate 270. The community is approximately 15.5 square miles in size and the 2000 population is 66,018. West Broad Street is one of the major commercial corridors in the Hilltop.

INTRODUCTION



The West Broad Street Economic Development Strategy provides the city and the Hilltop community with a blueprint for the revitalization of West Broad Street from Highland to Terrace avenues. The impetus for the development of the strategic plan was the city working with the State of Ohio to acquire an undeveloped site along Wheatland Avenue just north of West Broad Street. During this process, the future of West Broad Street and its impact on the Hilltop was recognized. The land on Wheatland Avenue was acquired by the city and a request for proposals was published to attract a residential developer to the site. Dominion Homes was selected and they plan to construct 104 new homes on Wheatland Avenue. The strategic plan will work in conjunction with the proposed residential development to create a vibrant place that will serve both existing and future Hilltop residents.

The area between Highland and Terrace avenues has the foundation to become a thriving commercial district. Existing buildings are typically two-stories in height and have close setbacks from West Broad Street. The scale of the buildings is appropriate for neighborhood commercial and office uses with residential uses on the second floor. This section of West Broad Street also has sidewalks, streetlights, street trees and trash receptacles. The district's location is also a positive attribute. In addition to being within a three-mile radius of almost 106,000 people, the district is also less than one

mile from I-70 and only three miles from downtown Columbus. The district is also adjacent to the Ohio Department of Public Safety and Ohio Department of Transportation offices. These offices bring over 2,000 employees to the area each day.

Building on these positive attributes, the strategic plan provides specific recommendations for the revitalization of the district. The recommendations are centered on the following topics -- model project, design, parking, marketing, and neighborhood improvements. All of the strategies were developed with the following goals in mind:

- ▲ **To create a commercial district to serve existing and future Hilltop residents and people that work in the Hilltop.**
- ▲ **To promote a mixed-use environment. Buildings should have neighborhood-oriented commercial and office uses on the first floor and residential uses on the second floor.**
- ▲ **To create a special and unique place with the use of design standards and guidelines, streetscape enhancements, and marketing.**
- ▲ **To work towards the creation of a safe and clean environment.**
- ▲ **To create an environment where businesses can be successful and thrive.**

THE HILLTOP COMMUNITY

The Hilltop has historically been a strong residential community. In 2000, more than 50 percent of the housing units were owner-occupied. The Hilltop community is very family-oriented and contains many parks, churches and schools.

The main commercial areas of the Hilltop are West Broad Street and Sullivant Avenue. West Broad Street has a rich history that dates back to the construction of the National Road (Broad Street) in the 1830's. However, these commercial corridors are suffering against the competition of larger shopping malls and centers.

In recent years, there has been a movement to breathe life back into the older commercial corridors, such as West Broad Street. These corridors are once again seen as providing opportunities to run a small retail business or office. While the strategies in this plan are focused on a specific portion of West Broad Street, they should be viewed as a starting point that will hopefully be applied to other parts of West Broad Street.



PLANNING PROCESS

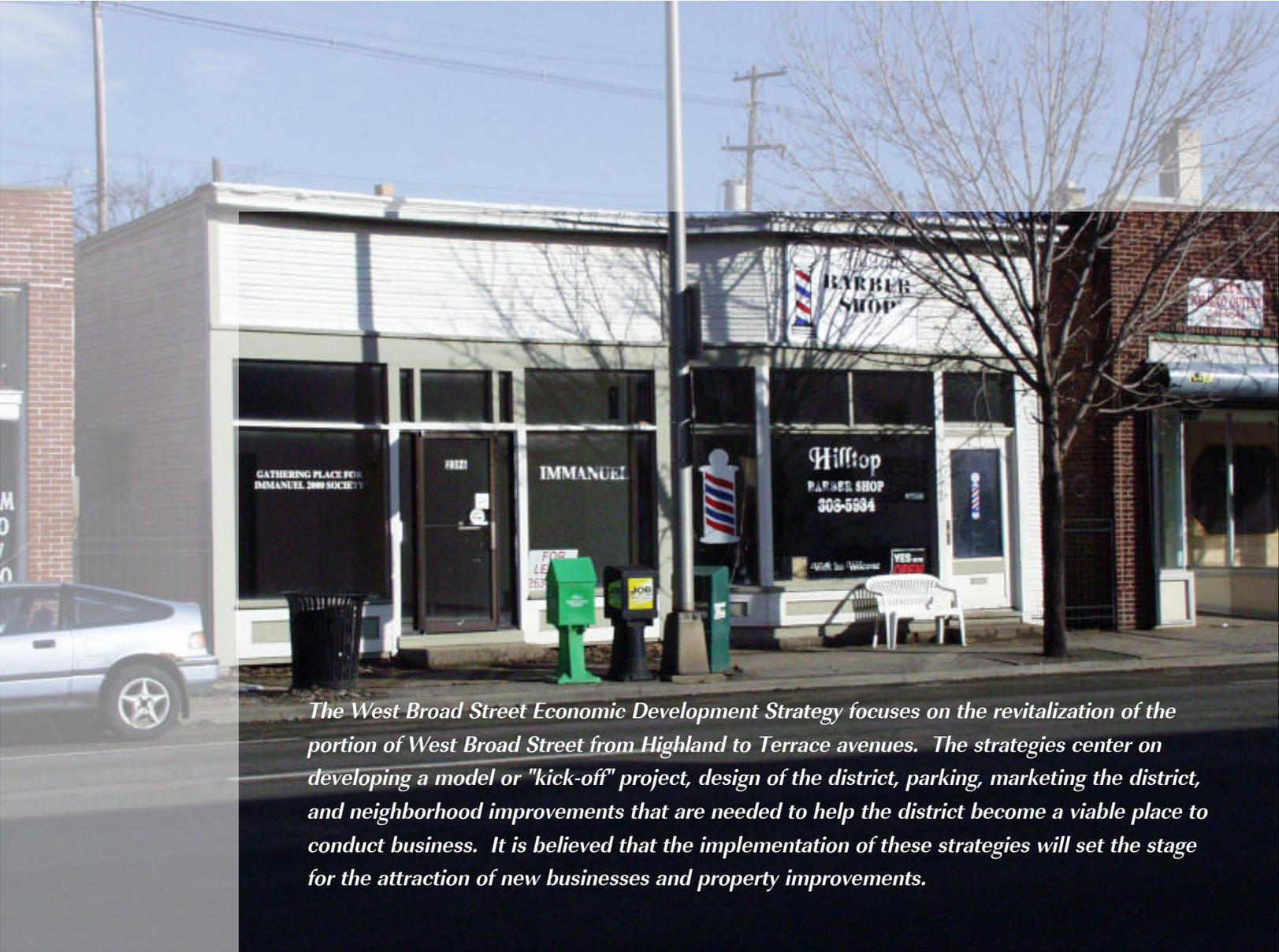
The Columbus Planning Division developed the *West Broad Street Economic Development Strategy* with the assistance of a steering committee. The steering committee consisted of representatives from the Greater Hilltop Area Commission, Greater Hilltop Community Development Corporation, Homes On The Hill, Columbus Urban Growth, Neighborhood Design Center, property owners within the district, and the Hilltop Business Association. Staff from the city of Columbus Economic Development, Neighborhood Services, and Transportation divisions also contributed to the planning process.

The steering committee met monthly during the development of the strategic plan. They devoted an entire meeting to guest speakers Sandy Wood with the Wood Companies and Tim Rollins with Metropolitan Partners, who spoke to the steering committee on their experiences with economic development in Columbus. Sandy Wood has developed property in the Short North District and has been a major player in revitalizing that portion of

Columbus. Tim Rollins has been involved in the development of Easton and has recently worked on developing neighborhood commercial uses in areas such as Clintonville.

In addition to working with the steering committee, a public outreach effort was conducted to inform the larger community of the project. On June 26, 2004, Planning Division staff attended the Hilltop Bean Dinner to distribute information on the project. Additionally, a public meeting was convened on March 10, 2005 to present the strategic plan to the property owners in the district and to the larger Hilltop community. Planning Division staff also presented the strategic plan to the Greater Hilltop Area Commission and the Hilltop Business Association for their endorsement.

After the community review was complete, the strategic plan was endorsed by the Development Commission on June 23, 2005 and adopted by City Council on July 18, 2005.



The West Broad Street Economic Development Strategy focuses on the revitalization of the portion of West Broad Street from Highland to Terrace avenues. The strategies center on developing a model or "kick-off" project, design of the district, parking, marketing the district, and neighborhood improvements that are needed to help the district become a viable place to conduct business. It is believed that the implementation of these strategies will set the stage for the attraction of new businesses and property improvements.

MODEL PROJECT

GOAL:

To develop a model project on West Broad Street between Highland and Terrace avenues that will serve as a stimulus to investment in the area.

Several specific types of businesses have been identified. These uses will provide a starting point for identifying a model project and focus marketing efforts down the line. The committee identified the following uses:

- ▲ Restaurants - providing breakfast, lunch and dinner
- ▲ Coffee shops
- ▲ Ethnic businesses
- ▲ After work gathering place
- ▲ Daycare
- ▲ Medical uses
- ▲ Service oriented businesses

Additionally, a survey was conducted of the Ohio Department of Transportation employees to determine the interest level of specific types of businesses locating on West Broad Street. The following are some results of that survey:

- ▲ For those employees that go out to eat for lunch the most popular answer in terms of lunch destination was Franklinton followed by the Hilltop.
- ▲ When asked what retail or services the employees would find convenient to have located near their office the most popular responses were -- bakery/deli, bank, fast-food or take out restaurant, coffee shop, pharmacy and dry cleaning.

STRATEGIES

- ▲ **Project Criteria** - To have a project built to achieve the following criteria:
 - Must be a "wow" project - a project that stimulates interest in the district
 - Mixed-use, with the entire building being occupied
 - Parking plan - where and how parking will be addressed for the project
 - Must be a major renovation to an existing building or new construction
 - Adheres to all guidelines, codes and plans pertaining to the district
 - Must contain one new retail/restaurant business, that is currently not located in the district, on the ground floor
- ▲ **City Investment** - Determine the amount of city investment needed to stimulate interest in the project. This investment could be as varied as tax incentives to infrastructure improvements.
- ▲ **Market to Investors** - Work with bankers, commercial real estate agents and brokers to market the district to potential investors.

- ▲ **Local Investment** - Work with existing business owners to determine needs and interest in expanding their investment.
 - Conduct informational meetings
 - Distribute "Did You Know" piece (see page 22) and strategic plan
 - Tie into meetings between Department of Development and local banks as part of the Partnership for a 21st Century City program.
- ▲ **Business Incubation** - Establish a business incubator program with a specific focus on providing business services and resources to people interested in starting a small business. A business that is part of this program could become a part of the model project. This program should be established by a non-profit organization that has a specific interest in the Hilltop area.
- ▲ **Homeownership** - Work with Dominion Homes on marketing the district to attract businesses that will stimulate interest in homeownership in the area.

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

Implementation should start following the adoption of the strategic plan by Columbus City Council. The first step will be to determine the amount of city investment that is available. This information is pertinent to marketing efforts.

The team is as follows:

- ▲ City of Columbus
 - Department of Development, Economic Development Division (lead)
 - Department of Development, Director's Office
 - Department of Development, Planning Division
- ▲ West Broad Street Economic Development Strategy Steering Committee. Work towards increasing involvement from organizations such as Columbus Urban Growth and the Neighborhood Design Center so that their professional expertise can be utilized during implementation.



MARKETING

GOAL:

To spark the interest of business owners, developers, real estate agents, and investors in the West Broad Street Commercial District.

Marketing the district to key individuals and groups is critical to the goal of creating a viable commercial district. Educating potential investors, developers and business owners on the positive attributes of the district is one of the first steps that must be taken to move towards revitalization.

STRATEGIES

- ▲ **Marketing Brochure** - Utilize "Did you know?" to initiate marketing efforts. "Did you know?" highlights some of the positive attributes of the district and surrounding area. This marketing piece can be found in the pocket of the front cover of the plan. This piece must be updated over time and reprinted. Seek out private funding of printing costs.
- ▲ **Unique Identity** - Create a unique identity for the district. Use name, location and history of the area to set the district apart from other commercial areas in the city. Specific programs that could be implemented include:

 - Assign and market a unique name for the district.
 - Creating a logo that could be placed on street signs within the district.
- Installing banners along West Broad Street. These banners could include the name of the district and logo. Seek funding through organizations such as the Columbus Foundation.
- ▲ **Market To Investors** - Conduct meetings with developers, bankers, commercial real estate agents and brokers. Supply these groups with copies of "Did you know?" and the strategic plan so that they can use these during discussions with potential investors.
- ▲ **Joint Marketing** - Work with existing business owners on starting a joint marketing campaign for the district. Joint advertising among existing businesses should be explored. Also, business owners should consider advertising in the State office buildings.
- ▲ **City investment** - Determine the level and type of city investment into the area. This investment could be as varied as tax incentives to infrastructure improvements. Use this investment commitment in marketing efforts.
- ▲ **Homeownership** - Work with Dominion Homes on marketing the district to attract businesses that will stimulate interest in homeownership in the area.

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

Implementation should start following the adoption of the strategic plan by Columbus City Council and should coincide with the implementation of the model project (see pages 9 - 11). Team is as follows:

- ▲ City of Columbus
 - Department of Development, Economic Development Division (lead)
 - Department of Development, Director's Office
 - Department of Development, Planning Division
- ▲ West Broad Street Economic Development Strategy Steering Committee
- ▲ Dominion Homes



DESIGN

GOAL:

To protect, re-establish and retain the unique architectural characteristics of the buildings in the West Broad Street Commercial District and to create an attractive streetscape.

(Some information adapted from *Hilltop NCR District Guidelines*, 1996)

In general the buildings currently located within the district were constructed before 1932. Street-level retail or offices, with second-floor residential use, characterize the buildings.

The typical building includes a large glass window display, with a recessed entrance, transom and bulkhead on the ground floor. The upper stories consist of a wall broken by vertical rectangular window with lintels and sills.

Repeated use of these basic elements from building to building has resulted in a coherent, pedestrian scale commercial district along West Broad Street. Unique detailing and color distinguish the buildings, creating architectural variety and character. The buildings are approximately 40-50 feet wide and approximately 20-30 feet high. Continuous building facades, sidewalk and street trees help to create the feeling of a street corridor of unity, order and activity.

The goal of the Hilltop community is to preserve the character of the district. There are some recent developments within the district

that deviate from the historical development pattern. This is to be avoided in the future.

In the late 1990's Columbus City Council adopted the *Urban Commercial Overlay (UCO)*. The purpose of this overlay was to, "regulate development in specifically designated areas in order to protect, re-establish and retain the unique architectural and aesthetic characteristics of older, urban commercial corridors. The provisions of the UCO are intended to encourage pedestrian-oriented development featuring retail display windows, reduced building setbacks, rear parking lots, and other pedestrian-oriented site design elements". The UCO was applied to West Broad Street from Highland to Hague avenues. This area captures the area addressed in the *West Broad Street Economic Development Strategy*.

Additionally, in 1996 design guidelines were created for West Broad Street. This was an outgrowth of the Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization program, in which West Broad Street is a part. Since the creation of the guidelines, some of the standards have been incorporated in the UCO.

In addition to the design of buildings, the look of the street itself is also important for the overall design of the district. Elements such as cross walks, well-maintained streets and sidewalks, mast arms for signals, unique street signs and banners all can add to the attractiveness of the district.

- ▲ **Urban Commercial Overlay** - Update UCO to include provisions regarding windows on the upper stories, chain link fencing, lighting, and backlit awnings.
- ▲ **Model Project** - Use model project (see page 9) as the example for all future projects to follow in terms of building design.
- ▲ **Preservation** - Work with the Columbus Historic Preservation Office to select an appropriate approach to preserving the character of the district and on updating the *Hilltop NCR Design Guidelines*. Approaches can include the following:
 - When a project receives federal money a Section 106 review must be conducted. Historic Preservation staff is included in this review to determine if a site is eligible for historic designation either on its own merits or because it is an integral part of a larger district. Utilize design guidelines as part of this review.
 - When a project receives city money the Historic Preservation Office should conduct a review of the project. Utilize design guidelines as part of this review.
 - Submit a nomination for the West Broad Street Commercial District to be included as a district on the Columbus Register of Historic Properties. If the district is accepted then exterior changes to existing buildings and new construction must be reviewed and approved by the Columbus Historic Resources Commission.

- Place the West Broad Street Commercial District into a conservation district. A conservation district is a tool that would allow specific community characteristics to be preserved. A conservation district designation would mean that Historic Preservation staff would review applications for changes within the district.
- ▲ **Graphics** - Establish a Special Graphics Control area for the UCO areas, including this district. The graphics control area would establish specific types, sizes, and location for signage within the designated areas.
- ▲ **Streetscape** - Create a distinct streetscape with the use of elements such as:
 - Mast arms at signalized intersections along West Broad Street.
 - Clearly marked pedestrian crossings at key points along West Broad Street. Pedestrian crossings can be marked by a change in pavement or striping.
 - Distinct street signs within the district.
 - Banners installed along West Broad Street. These banners could display the district name and logo and could change with the time of year. Seek funding through organizations such as the Columbus Foundation.
 - Work with the city to prioritize street and alley improvements within the district. This should include alley lighting to help increase safety in the area.

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

- ▲ City of Columbus
 - Department of Development, Historic Preservation Office
 - Department of Development, Planning Division
 - Department of Development, Zoning Office
 - Department of Public Service
- ▲ West Broad Street Economic Development Strategy Steering Committee
- ▲ Greater Hilltop Area Commission
- ▲ Neighborhood Design Center

PARKING AND CIRCULATION

GOAL:

To help create a viable commercial corridor by providing adequate on-street and off-street parking opportunities for customers and creating a safe pedestrian environment.

In 2000, the Greater Hilltop Area Commission recognized that the amount of parking available for West Broad Street businesses was in need of attention. As a result the West Broad Street Parking Committee Report was developed. Although the parking report deals with a larger area than the West Broad Street Commercial District, the recommendations are relevant to the district.

STRATEGIES

- ▲ **On-Street Parking** - Restore on-street parking between Highland and Clarendon avenues.

On-street parking for businesses located between Highland and Clarendon avenues was restricted when the new state buildings for Public Safety and Transportation were opened on West

Broad Street. At the time the buildings were completed, the portion of West Broad Street located between Highland and Clarendon avenues was restriped to eliminate one eastbound lane and was replaced with a left turn lane into the new facilities. The change in traffic pattern was not fully discussed with the affected property owners and has created a hardship for existing businesses that relied upon on-street parking to provide easy daytime access to its operations from patrons that are elderly or have physical disabilities. Although parking in the rear of the business operations provides some relief, access to the sites is limited by the automobile congestion caused by parents dropping and picking-up children who attend Highland Elementary School located immediately behind the subject properties.

Restoration of on-street parking for established businesses operating between Highland and Clarendon avenues is critical to maintaining the viability of these office-oriented operations.

PARKING AND CIRCULATION

- ▲ **24-Hour Parking** - Permit on-street parking along West Broad Street at all times.

Aside from the portions of West Broad Street where a parking lane does not exist (area between Highland and Clarendon avenues), the hours of on-street parking are currently limited. The restricted hours currently include 7:00 am to 9:00 am traveling eastbound and 4:00 pm to 6:00 pm traveling westbound. The effect of the restricted parking hour policy is to limit access to the community's primary central business district operations during peak traffic periods. As a result, business owners are not able to capture this potential business market, which limits their growth opportunities and is a deterrent to other business owners establishing operations in the central business district.

The hours of on-street parking between Hague and Clarendon avenues should be expanded to all hours of the day, including peak traffic periods in the morning and evening. In order for this recommendation to be effective, business owners must restrict the use of parking in front of their establishments to patrons only. Without active enforcement of a patron-only on-street parking policy, employees of the business and tenants residing on the second level of many of the mixed-use commercial buildings in the district will limit the effectiveness of this recommendation. One way to limit on-street parking

to patrons is to place time limits on parking, for instance a two-hour parking limit could be instituted.

For those concerned about traffic flow through the Hilltop during peak hours, the availability of an alternative route (I-70) immediately north of West Broad Street provides a sufficient substitute to alleviate such concerns. The redirection of drivers to I-70 will likely increase the percentage of vehicles traveling West Broad Street that are occupied by residents of the neighborhood and are most likely to purchase the goods and services at businesses along West Broad Street.

- ▲ **Off Street Parking** - Allow parking two lots deep north or south of existing alleyways for developments that strictly adhere to the commercial overlay district requirements. However, do not allow alleyway to be vacated for parking or development.

A primary concern of the Hilltop business community during the development and approval of the *Urban Commercial Overlay* (UCO) and neighborhood design guidelines was the overall availability of on-site parking for developments in the central business district. It was argued that the size of the community's existing commercial lots, even with parking in the rear, would not allow for the construction of a functional facility while simultaneously providing the appropriate amount of parking for patrons.

In response to this concern, it may be appropriate for proposed developments to secure two lots deep (i.e. north or south) of the existing alleyways running parallel with West Broad Street behind the existing commercial buildings to be used for parking. This provision should only be permitted when the proposed development adheres strictly to the approved commercial overlay district standards. When used for parking, it is recommended that at least twenty-five feet of landscaping and fencing be used immediately adjacent to affected residential properties to screen the parking from the neighborhoods.

It is not recommended that the alleyway be vacated to allow for development. The existing alleyways are an important feature of the neighborhood's traffic pattern and are an integral part of the community's vision for accessing other businesses in the central business districts. The alleyways should remain open to general public purpose.

Finally, to link parking at the rear of facilities with commercial activity along West Broad Street, it is recommended that "pass-through walkways" be included in development plans. A pass-through is a walkway leading from the parking area to

the sidewalk. The pass-through need not be an elaborate addition to the proposed development but should provide, at a minimum, a paved surface that leads directly to the West Broad Street sidewalk. Adjustments to fencing and landscaping along West Broad Street must be made to accommodate the pass-through.

▲ **Public Parking Access** - Support continued access to parking lots improved with public funds.

Several years ago, public funds were used to improve parking lots located behind the buildings on the south side of the street between Oakley and Wayne avenues and the lot immediately east of the Hilltop Lutheran Church. In exchange for the public funds, the property owners were required to use the lots for general public parking. The lease agreements outlining the conditions have expired.

It is recommended that the city of Columbus explore shared use agreements with the current landowners to allow the lots to be used for general parking. Once this is established, signs prominently noting the lots are for general use should be installed.

PARKING AND CIRCULATION

- ▲ **Use of Right-of-Way** - Ensure the placement of commercial trash receptacles is clear of public right-of-way.

It is not uncommon to find commercial trash receptacles that are improperly placed in the public right-of-way. Placement of the receptacles in the alleyways is restricting the movement of vehicles through the alleys and limited access to existing parking facilities located at the rear of buildings.

It is recommended that business owners, working with the city, actively pursue the proper placement of trash receptacles in the alleyways and undertake routine community clean-up campaigns to clear litter from the alleys. Implementation of these recommendations will improve access to existing parking facilities, beautify the alleys and neighborhood, and create a safer environment for patrons.

- ▲ **Public Parking** - Seek financial assistance to promote improvement of existing parking facilities.

Noticeable along the eastern edge of the West Broad Street business district is the absence of improved parking facilities that are visible from the street. It is not the intention to encourage the use of parking on all vacant sites, however, the block of businesses between Wheatland and Oakley avenues (south side of West Broad Street) does not have adequate off-street parking.

Work with the existing owner of the lot on the southwest corner of Wheatland Avenue and West Broad Street to develop it into a public parking lot. This lot is currently being used for private parking. Access to the parking lot should be made from the existing alley. Signage should be installed to alert the general public of its availability. Additionally, landscaping should be installed along West Broad Street and Wheatland Avenue to soften the appearance from the road.

- ▲ **Parking Meters** - Consider the use of parking meters only after demand increases.

At this early stage of redevelopment, the installation of parking meters is not warranted. As previously mentioned, however, the active enforcement of parking space use by patrons and not employees or residents is critical to ensuring the maximum benefit of providing such additional spaces. In the event the individual business owners or the city cannot effectively enforce this policy, the use of parking meters should be considered. As redevelopment along West Broad occurs, the use of parking meters may be warranted to keep the turnover of parking

spaces adequate to properly serve the businesses. This issue should be reconsidered in five years unless warranted prior to that time.

- ▲ **Pedestrians** - Strengthen the pedestrian nature of the district by providing:
 - Clearly marked pedestrian crossing at key points along West Broad Street. Pedestrian crossing can be marked by a change in pavement or striping.
 - Providing street lighting in all areas.

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

- ▲ City of Columbus
 - Department of Public Service, Transportation Division
 - Department of Development, Economic Development Division, Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization and capital improvement programs
- ▲ Greater Hilltop Area Commission
- ▲ West Broad Street Economic Development Strategy Commercial District Steering Committee



NEIGHBORHOOD IMPROVEMENTS

GOAL:

To create a safe and clean environment to help foster community and business revitalization.

Improving the fabric of the residential areas surrounding West Broad Street is critical to the success of the revitalization effort for West Broad Street. The city of Columbus and community leaders must continue to work with homeowners, tenants and landlords to create a safe, attractive and vibrant neighborhood. Programs that are available to encourage homeownership and to assist with home repair are listed in the Appendix on page 32.

Public safety, both real and received, has a tremendous impact on the vitality of a community. To help tackle public safety issues, it is important that the community work with the Division of Police. In general, the portion of West Broad Street addressed in the strategic plan and the immediate surrounding area is a high crime area. Additionally, this area is a victim of repeat offenders. Neighborhood groups should strongly consider building a relationship with the City Attorney's office regarding addressing issues surrounding the court system and repeat offenders.

Code violations contribute to a decrease in an area's vitality and ability to attract residents, businesses and customers. In general, the city of Columbus' code enforcement system operates on a complaint-driven basis. It is important for community and business organizations to build relationships with the area's code enforcement officers and the Neighborhood Liaison for the area. The community and the city working together can achieve a more proactive approach to code enforcement.

The Columbus Health Department is planning on building a new health center to serve the Hilltop and other surrounding neighborhoods. There is a possibility that this health center will be located on West Broad Street. A new health center would be a great addition to the neighborhood and would provide much needed services.

Consideration should be given to co-locate other neighborhood services, such as a community policing center, within the health center building.

STRATEGIES

- ▲ **Residential Areas** - Improve and strengthen surrounding residential areas.
 - Conduct outreach efforts to educate homeowners, tenants and landlords on programs available through the city of Columbus and non-profit organizations. Programs range for rehab assistance to tax incentives. A list of programs is contained in the Appendix on page 32.
 - Work with the city's Land Management Office on identifying vacant property and homes that may also be tax delinquent. These properties can be requested for foreclosure through Franklin County and added to the city's land bank.
 - Create a landlord association. This association could create a forum to share information with landlords on topics such as eviction laws, screening tenant applicants, and how to spot drug use. Additionally, this would also serve as an avenue for landlords to discuss common problems and solutions. The goal is begin to engage landlords into the community.

- ▲ **City-Community Partnerships** - Strengthen relationships between the community and the Division of Police Community Liaison, the area code enforcement officers, and the Neighborhood Liaison.
 - Invite liaisons and code enforcement officers to community meetings and events.
 - Prepare a list of potential public safety and code enforcement issues to present to liaisons and code enforcement staff. Continue to follow-up on status of enforcement. Consider publishing potential code violations in a neighborhood newsletter.

- ▲ **Repeat Offenders** - Create a relationship between the community and the City Attorney's Office. Work with the City Attorney's Office to address issues surrounding the court system and repeat offenders. Consider creating a court watch system. Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) has created a model court watch system where representatives attend court dates for offenders. MADD is there to monitor sentencing patterns and to put pressure on the court system to be tough against offenders.

- ▲ **Health Center** - Work with the Columbus Health Center on the planning of the new health center for the Hilltop. Encourage the co-location of other needed services within the new facility. These services could range from other health services to a community policing center.

IMPLEMENTATION TEAM

- ▲ Greater Hilltop Area Commission
- ▲ City of Columbus
 - Division of Police, Community Liaison
 - Department of Development, Neighborhood Services Division
 - City Attorney's Office
 - Department of Development, Housing Division
- ▲ West Broad Street Economic Development Strategy Steering Committee
- ▲ Hilltop Business Association
- ▲ Neighborhood Blockwatch groups



CONCLUSION

This strategic plan is a blueprint for the revitalization of West Broad Street from Highland to Terrace avenues. The strategies contained in the plan are the basis from which the community and city should begin efforts to improve the area.

The strategic plan offers strategies on a model project, design, parking and circulation, marketing, and neighborhood improvements. Again, the strategies have been designed to foster the following goals for the area:

- ▲ To create a commercial district to serve existing and future Hilltop residents and people that work in the Hilltop.

- ▲ To promote a mixed-use environment. Buildings should have neighborhood oriented commercial and office uses on the first floor and residential uses on the second floor.
- ▲ To create a special and unique place with the use of design guidelines, streetscape enhancements, and marketing.
- ▲ To work towards the creation of a safe and clean environment.
- ▲ To create an environment where businesses can be successful and thrive.

It is crucial that both the city and the community work together to achieve the goals and strategies contained in this plan.



*ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES
Business development, expansion and retention programs are available through several organizations. The following lists are examples of programs that are available. If interested, a business will need to contact the appropriate organization to obtain the specific requirements of the program.*

CITY OF COLUMBUS

CONTACT THE OFFICE OF BUSINESS ASSISTANCE (645-8172) FOR THE FOLLOWING PROGRAMS:

- ▲ **Retention and Expansion** - The OBA conducts site visits to local businesses to identify specific opportunities for business retention and/or expansion where City efforts could potentially have a helpful impact. The OBA seeks opportunities for helping to create an environment in which all businesses can grow and thrive.
- ▲ **Tax Incentives** - Tax incentives are used strategically to leverage significant business expansions or relocations. Criteria for offering tax incentives are based on the benefits a project represents for the community and whether tax incentives are necessary to secure the project for Columbus. Criteria include the amount of investment and job creation and/or retention, and whether the project involves a priority sector or targeted geographic area.

- ▲ **Infrastructure Assistance** - The OBA can assist businesses in securing public infrastructure improvements critical to the success of expansion, retention, or relocation projects. Typical infrastructure improvements facilitated for business projects in the past are storm and sanitary sewers, water lines, streetscape enhancements and road improvements.
- ▲ **International Business Assistance** - The OBA assists in the development of international business opportunities that result in local business growth and job creation. Types of assistance provided include the development of business-to-business linkages with Columbus companies, coordination of business visits to Columbus, referrals for local banks, legal firms, and other business services and packaging of available sites, buildings and incentives.

- ▲ **Business Development Fund** - Eligible activities include acquisition of land, building, machinery and equipment. Existing businesses with project sites within the City limits are eligible to apply. The City's participation is limited to \$200,000 with a maximum term of 20 years.
- ▲ **Central City Loan Fund** - Loan funds can be used for acquisition and redevelopment of real property and to purchase machinery and equipment. Project sites where new job creation will take place must be located within the Columbus Empowerment Zone or Core Central City. Existing profitable businesses, developers with a proven successful track record and economically viable non-profit organizations are eligible to apply. This program has a two-tiered interest rate structure that can be provided upon request.
- ▲ **Working Capital Loan Fund** - Eligible uses of loan proceeds include purchase of inventory, defraying increased operating costs incurred in business expansion, and acquisition of small equipment. Existing businesses with project sites within the City limits are eligible to apply. Loans start at \$15,000 with a maximum of \$50,000 for up to five years.
- ▲ **Special Improvement Districts** - A Special Improvement District (SID) is a self-help tool that allows property owners to assess themselves for area-wide services and capital improvements. The Office of Financial Assistance works with

groups or organizations desiring to form a SID. All SIDs must be created pursuant to the Ohio Revised Code, Chapter 1710. The average time needed to form a SID is approximately two years.

- ▲ **Urban Infrastructure Recovery Fund** - This program funds several million dollars of capital improvements per year in central city neighborhoods. Residents themselves propose projects based on a premise that they know best what their neighborhood needs. Since 1992, \$36 million in public roadway and public park improvements have been constructed such as street repaving, alley resurfacing, street lighting upgrades, street trees, curbs and sidewalks, playground equipment, and neighborhood gateways.
- ▲ **Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization Program** - This program offers technical assistance, loans and matching grants, capital improvements, and planning services in conjunction with the established business association in 15 commercial areas surrounding the downtown. Neighborhood Commercial Revitalization (NCR) staff provide assistance to individual businesses to secure architectural design services and financial incentives for acquisition and exterior rehabilitation of commercial property through the NCR Investment Fund, the NCR Commercial Improvement Loan Fund, the NCR Facades Renovation Fund and the NCR Storefront Renovation Grant Fund.

GREATER COLUMBUS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

- ▲ **Business Tools** - The Chamber Market Research Department provides services such as the New Resident Kit; mailing labels from the Largest Employers Database and New Resident Kit requests; and publications including maps, education and business directories, the Membership directory, surveys, a regional profile and several Columbus guides. Call 225-6084 for more information.
- ▲ **Columbus Venture Network (CVN)** - A forum where business investors and entrepreneurs can make valuable contacts, exchange information and create mutual business opportunities. Call 225-6938 for more information.
- ▲ **ITC of Central Ohio** - ITC fosters the growth of technology-based companies and the effective use of technology by companies in Central Ohio by providing a forum where high-tech leaders and entrepreneurs can exchange ideas and information. Call 225-6907 for more information.
- ▲ **Small Business Council (SBC)** - A volunteer organization that acts as an advocate for small business issues. The SBC also offers special business services, networking events, education programs and seminars and recognition programs to promote the growth of small businesses in Greater Columbus. Call 225-6938 for more information.
- ▲ **Small Business Development Center (SBDC)** - SBDC counselors help small businesses through the many hurdles they face such as funding and licensing. Call 225-6066 for more information.
- ▲ **Women's Network for Entrepreneurial Training (WNET) Mentor Program** - A mentor program designed to increase the numbers of women business owners and their success. WNET aids emerging women-owned businesses by linking them with experienced women entrepreneurs who help guide them through the challenges of growing a women-owned business. Call 225-6910 for more information.

OHIO DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT

- ▲ **166 Direct Loan** - Provides loans for land and building acquisition, expansion or renovation, and equipment purchase. Call 466 4551 for more information.
- ▲ **Capital Access Program** - Encourages lending by establishing a unique land "guarantee" reserve pool at the lending institution. The State, the lender and the borrower each make a small contribution into the pool. The reserve pool is available to the lender for recovery of any losses they may have for any loan that is enrolled in the Capital Access Program. Call 644-7708 for more information.
- ▲ **Minority Direct Loan** - Provides loans for the purchase or improvement of fixed assets for state-certified minority-owned businesses. Call 644-7708 for more information.
- ▲ **Ohio Mini-Loan Guarantee Program** - Provides loan guarantees for fixed assets for small business (start-up or existing business expansion) for projects of \$100,000 or less. Call 644-7708 for more information.
- ▲ **Urban Redevelopment Loan** - Removes development barriers from urban core property so that private sector job opportunities can be created. Call 466-4551 for more information.
- ▲ **Ohio Job Creation Tax Credit** - Provides corporate franchise or state income tax credit for businesses that expand or locate in Ohio. Call 466-2317 for more information.

HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

The following programs are offered by the city of Columbus. This list is not exhaustive but provides an idea of what types of programs are offered.

- ▲ **Neighborhood Investment Districts/Residential Tax Incentive** - Provides tax abatement to eligible homebuyer purchasing a new home from a developer, existing home owners making improvements of at least 20% of the current value of the existing property, and to owners of rental property who make improvements of at least 50% of the current value of the property. For more information call the Columbus Housing Division at 645-6229.
- ▲ **Downpayment Assistance Program** - Provides downpayment assistance for eligible first time homebuyers purchasing a home in the Columbus Public School District. For more information contact the Columbus Housing Division at 645-6211.
- ▲ **Homeownership Development Program** - Provides gap financing to developers/buildings. This is an incentive for a developer/builder to rehabilitate or construct homes and then to enable homebuyers to purchase affordable housing in

Columbus. For more information contact the Columbus Housing Division at 645-7986.

- ▲ **Vacant and Abandoned Home Financial Incentives Program**- Provides gap financing to developers/builders as an incentive to rehabilitate vacant and abandoned single-family homes within the Neighborhood Investment Districts. For more information contact the Columbus Housing Division at 645-7986.
- ▲ **Mobile Tool Library Program** - Provides assistance to eligible residents for home repair by lending free of charge over 200 different types of hand and power tools for home repair, maintenance, landscaping and painting. For more information contact the Columbus Housing Division at 645-8542.
- ▲ **CHORES Program** - Assists seniors and disabled persons with minor repairs to their homes. These repairs must be for the safety or health of the senior or disabled person. For more information contact the Columbus Housing Division at 645-8542.

